

THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2017

**WHITE HOUSE COMMENDS ATLANTA FIRST RESPONDERS
FOR RESPONSE TO INTERSTATE 85 BRIDGE FIRE**

*President Trump Thanks City Of Atlanta Firefighters And Police And Georgia State Patrol Officers For
Their Distinguished Service During The Fire And Bridge Collapse*

WASHINGTON, D.C. – President Donald J. Trump hosted frontline responders from the Atlanta Fire Rescue Department, Atlanta Police Department, and Georgia State Patrol yesterday at the White House to thank them for their bravery and service during the fire on Interstate 85 that resulted in a bridge collapse and the shutdown of a major Southeast transportation artery. U.S. Department of Transportation Secretary Elaine Chao also attended the meeting.

During Atlanta's evening rush hour on March 30, 2017, firefighters were called to the scene of a major fire on Interstate 85 that burned for over an hour before a section of a bridge collapsed. Thanks to the courage and professionalism of these first responders, no one was killed in the fire or collapse of the bridge, which carries hundreds of thousands of vehicles every day. The vigilance and training of Atlanta's public safety officers and the Georgia State Patrol kept a catastrophic situation from becoming a deadly tragedy.

"Atlanta is beyond fortunate to have the caliber of firefighters and police officers that we do – dedicated men and women who put their lives in harm's way on a daily basis, in order to keep us safe," said Mayor Kasim Reed. "President Trump's recognition of these public servants means a great deal to them and to the City of Atlanta. The collaboration and support we have received from our Federal and State partners has been extraordinary."

At the request of Governor Nathan Deal, the U.S. Department of Transportation immediately approved \$10 million in emergency relief funds to assist the Georgia Department of Transportation with repair of the bridge which is slated to re-open by June 15, 2017.

"The City of Atlanta, as well as the entire State of Georgia should be proud of the efforts of our troopers, as well as the City of Atlanta first responders during the tragic incident on I-85. Each performed in a highly commendable manner that, undoubtedly, saved lives and is worthy of the notable recognition that they are receiving from President Trump today," said Governor Nathan Deal.

"I am extremely honored and proud of the efforts of each of the troopers on scene of the I-85 bridge fire in late March. As the men and women of Atlanta Fire fought tirelessly to get the fire under control, our troopers went onto the bridge in order to guide and direct an evacuation of vehicles approaching the danger. I have no doubt that their efforts saved lives that night and we are extremely humbled by the recognition extended by President Trump," said Colonel Mark McDonough, Commissioner, Georgia Department of Public Safety.

###

[Unsubscribe](#)

The White House · 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW · Washington DC 20500 · 202-456-1111